About ATVs

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are part of a group referred to as off-highway vehicles (OHVs) which also include dune buggies, dune-buggies, amphibious vehicles, etc. All OHVs are defined as motorized, four-wheel-road vehicles with an axle weight of less than 6,000 pounds, but more than 3,000 pounds. OHVs are not allowed on any public lands however landowners or persons authorized by landowners may operate ATVs on their property for any reason. Additionally, OHVs can be operated on public land during the closed time periods which may be set by a DNR conservation officer as pursuant to the comprehensive natural condition. ATV use is regulated in state and national forest. See Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook for more information.

AVT Restrictions & Prohibitions

It is unlawful to:

• travel to or from a site the person intends to hunt that day.
• lawfully hunting on public or private land.
• on school grounds.
• within a city with a population of 2,500 or more.
• within Anoka, Hennepin, or Ramsey counties.
• on or rutting, damages, or destroys trees or growing crops (the penalty for this type of violation).
• on public waters within 100 feet of the bridge, obstacle or area and make the crossing without delay.

It is unlawful to:

• transport an unloaded, unsecured shotgun or rifle in a motor vehicle when:
  - a child is a passenger with permission.
  - a child is a passenger with permission.

There is a special provision for hunting with an unloaded firearm and for hunting with a bighorn sheep or for big game.

Hours of Operation Restricted

Regulations Handbook

Hunting and Trapping

Hunting and ATVs

Plan ahead. Know where you are riding! Will you need to travel by road?

You may operate on an off-highway vehicle on a bridge, roadway shoulder, or the inside back of a public vehicle for the type of recreation activity that you desire or if necessary to avoid obstructions to travel or environmentally sensitive areas. You must remain in the right-hand lane, enter the roadway within 100 feet of the bridge, obstacle or area and make the crossing without delay.

You may not operate on or across lakes, rivers, or streams except:

• when the water body is ice-covered.
• as a bridge, submergence, or designated low-pressure crossing.
• on public lands without a special disability permit.

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**State Forest Lands**

Hunting, trapping, and fishing in state forests are generally allowed during open seasons with a valid license. Some state forests contain private holdings within their boundaries, many of which are signed “No Hunting.”

ATVs are generally permitted on state forest roads and trails in accordance with state forest motor vehicle use classifications and regulations. Check for updates on Forest Road and Trail conditions before you go. See www.findthetrails.com and click on “OSV Trail” or “Forest Road” closures. (See the map and list of forest land classifications.)

**Areas with Limitations**

The big game hunting/trapping exceptions do not apply in areas signed and mapped indicating “No Motorized Travel.” All entry points will be posted as “Area with Limitations.”

**Unmarked/Unsigned Access Routes:**

In a MANAGED forest, motor vehicles MAY operate on all pre-existing, unsigned access routes on State forest lands. In a LIMITED forest, motor vehicles MAY NOT operate on pre-existing, unsigned routes except persons with a valid hunting, trapping, or commercial trapping license may use routes not specifically designated for other uses as per the hunting trapping exceptions. However, when operating on unsigned routes in Minnesota’s state forests, it is illegal to cause erosion, rutting, or damage to trees. So use your best judgment—if it’s not, don’t use!

**Managed or Limited State Forest Land Hunting/Trapping Exceptions (Does not apply in the R.L. Dorer Memorial Northern Forest)**

Traveling off of roads and trails (cross-country travel) is prohibited on all state lands; however, Minnesota statute has provided four exceptions for ATVs operated in MANAGED or LIMITED State Forests. In these State Forests, persons with a valid hunting, trapping, or commercial trapping license in possession may use Class 1 ATVs to travel cross-country to:

1. Retrieve big game (Sept. through Dec.)
2. Hunt for big game and construct stands (Oct. through Dec.)
3. Trap during the open season for protected furbearers
4. Trap for minnows under certain conditions.

And Class 2 ATVs, ORVs, and HEVs to travel on a trail not specifically designated for other uses. See Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations handbook for more information at www.mndnr.gov.

**General WMA ATV Restrictions**

A person CANNOT operate an ATV in a Wildlife Management Area, a State Park, or a Scientific and Natural Area, except as specifically authorized by law or rule. See the Minnesota Hunting and Trapping Regulations Handbook for more information or www.mndnr.gov.

On WMAs north and west of the green line drawn on adjacent map, an ATV may be used by a licensed deer hunter who does not possess a firearm (cased or uncased) to retrieve and transport a deer that is known to be dead from the class of shooting hours during the firearms deer season and for one day after the season.

**Bear Baiting**

Cross-country travel (off roads and trails), with unpowered vehicles for the purpose of bear hunting other than in Minnesota Class 1 ATV areas only on state land to remove downed big game in Limited forest.

**ATV Operation that Causes Erosion or Rutting, Damages, or Destroys Trees or Growing Crops**

ATV operation that causes erosion or rutting, damages, or destroys trees or growing crops is illegal and may lead to closing state forest areas to ATV use during hunting.